Nautical Almanac Office,

Navy Department.

Washington, D. C., January 8, 1879.

Dear Sir:

I have long desired to have executed an experimental determination of the velocity of light, in which the advantages of the two methods heretofore adopted should be combined. My principal object in this is the determination of the solar parallax, and thence of the mass of the Earth. I have made preparations to apply to Congress for an appropriation of $5,000.00 to defray the cost of the apparatus. It has, however, been suggested that the Rumford Committee, of which you are Chairman, might supply the necessary funds. I therefore beg to submit the following inquiries to that Committee, through you:—

(1) Is it possible, and advisable, for the Committee to expend the sum of

five thousand dollars for the above purpose, during the next Eighteen months?

(2) In the event of this being impracticable, could the Committee furnish a lesser sum, to be added to funds which might be derived from other sources?

(3) In the event of an appropriation being made by Congress for the purpose, and of such appropriation proving insufficient to complete the experiments, would it be advisable to aid in their completion from the Rumford fund?

A brief explanation of my plan is in the hands of Professor Pickering, who is, I believe, a member of the Rumford Committee. It may, therefore, not be necessary for me to forward you a separate copy.

I shall be very glad if this subject can receive Early attention; because, if not favorably acted upon by you, I desire to obtain an appropriation for the purpose from Congress during its present session.

Yours very respectfully,

Simon Newcomb

Supt Nau: Alm.

Professor Joseph Lovering,
Chairman Rumford Committee,
Cambridge,
Mass.

Yours very sincerely

Simon Kennedy

DSI

Simon Newcomb
1835-1909
Astronomer - member of an Inst. of Fra

Dr. C. H. F. Peters,
Hamilton College,
Clinton,
N. Y.

Nautical Almanac Office,
Navy Department,
Washington, D. C., May 21st. 1882.

My Dear Doctor:

Many thanks for having again observed Polyhymnia. I suppose the chances are that yours will be the only ones made at this opposition. I think I shall wait awhile before introducing cosmic time into the Nautical Almanac.

The little ones will be glad to hear from you.

Yours very truly.

S. Newcomb

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NEWCOMB, Simon

A. L. S. to Prof. Lovering of the Rumford Committee, Cambridge, Mass. soliciting funds for an experiment